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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 1004

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPF, GR, EC, NATO
SUBJECT: CARAMANLIS PROFESSES SATISFACTION OVER HIS EUROPEAN TRIP

REF: ATHENS 235

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS RETURNED TO ATHENS YESTERDAY (FEBRUARY 1) FROM HIS WEEK-LONG TRIP TO LONDON, BRUSSELS, PARIS AND BONN EXPRESSING SATISFACTION OVER WHAT HE CONSIDERED WERE SUCCESSFUL TALKS WITH THE LEADERS OF THE COUNTRIES HE HAD VISITED AS WELL AS WITH EC AND NATO OFFICIALS. IN HIS ARRIVAL STATEMENT CARAMANLIS STATED:
-- HE HAD GONE TO EUROPE PERSONALLY TO ADVANCE SOLUTIONS TO THE SPECIAL PROBLEMS FACING GREECE;
-- HE HAD CONFERRED WITH EUROPEAN LEADERS ON THE SUBJECT OF GREEK ENTRY INTO THE EC, RELATIONS WITH NATO, THE CYPRUS
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QUESTION AND GREECE'S "DANGEROUS DISPUTES" WITH TURKEY;
-- HE HAD SUCCEEDED IN GAINING THE AGREEMENT OF THE LEADERS HE MET TO SPEED UP THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR GREEK ENTRY INTO THE EC AND TO ESTABLISH THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WHICH GREECE SEEKS WITH THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE;
-- HE ENCOUNTERED UNDERSTANDING FROM THE FOREIGN LEADERS WITH REGARD TO THE GOG'S POSITIONS ON THE CYPRUS QUESTION AND THE

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AEGEAN SEA ISSUES;
-- ABOVE ALL, TO DEAL WITH THE NATION'S MANY PROBLEMS SUCCESS-
FULLY, HE NEEDED THE SUPPORT OF THE GREEK PEOPLE IN PURSUING
NATIONAL UNITY, SOCIAL PEACE AND A SOUND ECONOMY. END UNCLASS-
IFIED.

2. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL: COMMENT: A CAREFUL READING OF THE ASSUR-
ANCES BY THE EUROPEAN LEADERS AND BY EC AND NATO OFFICIALS
REVEALS THAT THE GENERAL PLEDGES OF SUPPORT ARE NOT AS SPECIFIC
OR AS IRONCLAD AS THE GOG WOULD LIKE. NEVERTHELESS, THE
CARAMANLIS TRIP HAS BEEN PORTRAYED BY THE GOG AS A SUCCESS. HIS
MEETINGS WERE WIDELY PUBLICIZED HERE, WITH EACH ENCOUNTER
PRESENTED AS A FIRM ENDORSEMENT FOR CARAMANLIS' POLICIES. THERE
WAS A TENDENCY TO OVERLOOK THE QUALIFIERS EXPRESSED BY CARAMANLIS'
INTERLOCUTORS WHILE HIGHLIGHTING THE POINTS OF APPARENT COMMON
ACCORD. THE PRIME MINISTER'S CLAIM THAT GREECE'S CASE WAS
SEPARATE FROM THOSE OF SPAIN AND PORTUGAL AND THAT THE EC
NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE CONCLUDED BY THE END OF 1978, THAT THE
RATIFICATION PROCESS WOULD TAKE PLACE IN 1979 AND THAT GREEK
ACCESSION WOULD OCCUR IN 1980, SEEMED TO BE BACKED AGAIN AT
THE POLITICAL LEVEL BY CALLAGHAN, GISCARD D'ESTAING, TINDEMANS
AND SCHMIDT. THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWING THE MEETING WITH
EC COMMISSION PRESIDENT ROY JENKINS AND REPORTS THAT EC COM-
MISSION VICE PRESIDENT NATALI HAD DECLARED THE NEGOTIATIONS
WOULD BE COMPLETED WITHIN 1978 GAVE ADDED EMPHASIS TO THIS
IMPRESSION.
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3. LIKEWISE, CARAMANLIS' CALL FOR RAPID CONCLUSION OF A SPECIAL
RELATIONSHIP WITH NATO APPEARED TO BE REAFFIRMED AFTER HIS ROUND
OF MEETINGS, ESPECIALLY WHEN NATO SECRETARY GENERAL LUNS WAS
REPORTED TO HAVE UNDERSCORED HIS CONCURRENCE PUBLICLY.

4. PAPANDREOU AND THE COMMUNIST PAPERS, RIZOSPASTIS AND AVGHI,
CRITICIZED THE TRIP, BUT OTHER NEWSPAPERS, INCLUDING OPPOSITION,
LIBERAL TO VIMA AND LEFTIST ELEFTHEROTYPIA, ACCORDED THE VISIT
BROAD AND GENERALLY SYMPATHETIC COVERAGE. SPECULATION HAS
ALREADY APPEARED THAT CARAMANLIS MAY UNDERTAKE ANOTHER TRIP TO
OTHER EC CAPITALS LATER IN THE YEAR.
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